Edwin Howland Blashfield

**MEDIUM**  Painting  
**NATIONALITY**  American  
**LIFE DATES**  Brooklyn, New York 1848 - 1936

Born in Brooklyn in 1848, Edwin Blashfield intended to enter Harvard University through the Boston Latin School, but was sent abroad to study in Paris after exhibiting a strong preference for art. He studied painting with Leon Bonnat between 1867 and 1880, and took several trips through Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium. He also acquired a degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1869.

His mural style was monumental and allegorical, influenced by Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Jean-Paul Laurens, and Paul Baudry, whose decorations he had studied in the Paris Panthéon. In 1887 he traveled to England and became briefly associated with the Anglo-American artist colony in Broadway, which included John Singer Sargent, Henry James, Frederic Leighton, Edmond Grosse, and Francis Davis Millet. After returning to the States and setting up a studio in New York, Blashfield displayed his murals at the 1893 World’s Columbian Exhibition in Chicago.

His best-known works are featured in the Great Reading Room of Washington, D.C.’s Library of Congress; private residencies, including the W. H. Vanderbilt mansion; capitol buildings in a number of states (Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin); and churches. A New Yorker his whole life, Blashfield was working well into his eighties until his death in 1936.